

CLEAN COPY OF REPLACEMENT PARAGRAPH

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please insert the following the paragraph after the paragraph ending at page 4, line 18 with the following paragraph:

a' --Figures 2 and 2a are schematic representations of a portion of respective fiber optic cable systems having an optical connection between optical fibers of a first cable and a second cable.--

Please replace the two successive paragraphs beginning at page 12, line 19 with the following two rewritten paragraph:

a2 --Fiber optic cables according to the present invention can be optically interconnected by, for example, fusion splicing, defining a cable system. In one system embodiment, concatenated cables have minimum variation in fiber length without the need to do cross splicing between inner and outer layers of buffer tubes of the respective cables, thereby minimizing differential fiber length (Figure 2). Layers of buffer tubes having like helix values have at least some of their respective optical fibers optically interconnected. In other words, the fiber optic cable system has first 10 and second 10' fiber optic cables, each of the first 10 and second 10' fiber optic cables having respective optical fibers 15, 15', 19, 19' that are disposed in respective buffer tubes 14, 14', 18, 18'. The buffer tubes defining at least two layers respectively in the cables, and are generally stranded about center areas of the respective fiber optic cables. The buffer tube layers define a relatively inner layer of buffer tubes closer to the center area, and an outer layer of buffer tubes being relatively further from the center area. The inner and outer buffer tube layers each define a respective helix value, the respective helix values within each cable can be

substantially the same; and the layer of buffer tubes having optical fibers of the first optical fiber cable is optically connected to a corresponding layer of buffer tubes having optical fibers of the second fiber optic cable, e.g., by fusion splicing. For example, optical fibers 15 of inner layer 14 can be optically connected to optical fibers 15' of inner layer 14' from cable 10 to cable 10'.

*As* Other balanced cable systems are possible as well. For example, where the respective helix values within each of the cables are substantially non-equal, and the layer of buffer tubes having optical fibers of the first optical fiber cable 10 are optically connected to a non-corresponding layer of buffer tubes having optical fibers of the second fiber optic cable 10' (Figure 2a). For example, an outer layer of buffer tubes 18 of a first cable 10 can be connected to an inner layer of buffer tubes 14' of a second cable 10', and vice versa. The respective helix values are established to as needed for the system requirements. Helix values of the interconnected layers can be substantially the same or non-equal.--

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